

# Relief Plans Leave Taxpayers Still Holding the Bag

By HENRY C. MacARTHUR  
Capitol News Service

SACRAMENTO — It will be the fashion between now and Nov. 5, the general election date, to jump on Proposition 9, the initiative constitutional amendment proposed originally by Philip E. Watson, Los Angeles County assessor, to limit property taxes to 1 per cent of assessed valuation.

The proposal, designed to halt the ever-increasing rate of property taxes by local government by shifting the burden to the State of Cal-

ifornia, unfortunately fails to carry out the over-all objective of lower taxes. It would mean lower taxes for the property owner on his property, but according to all the estimates made by opponents, the decrease would be more than compensated for by increases in the sales tax and the income tax.

Had the proposed constitutional amendment carried a provision for a limitation on all taxes, including the sales tax and the state income tax, it would be much more palatable to the pub-

lic, which on all fronts is a drain and the spiraling expenditures of government, with the consequent drain on the public pocket-

However, this was not written into the proposal, and voters are left the choice of accepting or rejecting the Watson amendment. Whichever way the public goes in November, the taxpayer is still coming out the little end of the horn, for the reason there is not in sight any hope that the tax drain will diminish.

In fact, quite the reverse

is true, as some experts in the tax field figure that despite the state's sound financial condition at the present time, new taxes will be necessary by 1970 to maintain the state's operations at the same level as they are at the present time.

Consequently, neither Proposition 9, nor the property tax relief amendment proposed by the legislature offers the people who pay the bills anything practical in the way of tax relief, which can be achieved only through one medium, and

that medium is the decreasing of state services to those necessary.

The big question, of course, is whether the electorate will stand for a decrease in services, even if it were offered to voters for their approval. The biggest cuts would come in the fields of both welfare and education, but in both these fields the opposition to reduction, whenever proposed, is tremendous. How much of that opposition is whipped up by the welfare people and the educationalists is anyone's guess.

In any event, substantial reductions in government expenditure do not appear to be forthcoming in the immediate future, which opens the question of how long the public can stand the annual increases in taxes they have been subjected to since the close of World War II.

Some economists contend that the breaking point is reached when the taxpayer is required to pay a third of his income to government for its support. And the figure now has passed that point. Hence the furor to

provide "relief" for those who are hardest hit, which are the people who pay taxes on real estate and other property.

The so-called "relief" provided in Proposition 9, and the legislature's tax amendment, therefore, appears to be nothing more than tossing a crumb to a starving man, hoping he might survive a little longer to feed the government kitty.

It is possible the people may approve both propositions, but in doing so, they will provide little, if any, "relief."

Your Right to Know Is the Key to All Your Liberties

## -Comment and Opinion-

TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1968

### Constitution Week

What does Sept. 17, 1787, mean to you?

As an American it should mean a great deal, since at that point in time occurred one of the most important events in our history . . . in the free world's history.

On Sept. 17, 1787, federal convention delegates approved the United States Constitution, with its clearly defined principles and precise balance of authority and freedom.

"Constitution Week," being observed this week, marks the 181st Anniversary of signing of this Charter of Liberty. It's a special time for Americans to study this truly remarkable document . . . to renew their faith in its precepts . . . to gain inspiration from its vision and purpose.

In addition to patriotic and civic groups, government, courts and our schools also are paying tribute to the Constitution, the most often imitated, oldest instrument of its kind. Here in Southern California, the Constitution Week Observance Committee, headed by Joe Crail, president of Coast Federal Savings

and Loan Association, is aiding in leadership of the annual celebration.

You can contribute to this occasion by flying your flag during the week, by a careful and meaningful reading of the Constitution, by discussions, by expressions of appreciation.

But we owe this document more than reverence and praise, more than compliance with its laws.

For almost two centuries, the Constitution has been the backbone of our Way of Life, the keel of our Ship of State. Now, it is incumbent upon all of us to protect our Magna Charta of Liberty from international socialism, which seeks to prevent its logic and precepts, to dilute and destroy its fundamentals.

Apathy is as costly as it is corrosive. For future generations as well as ourselves, it is our sacred obligation to shield the Constitution from its enemies, who are jealous of its strength.

America, with the world's highest standard of living, also possesses the world's most perfectly-drawn Constitution. This circumstance is no mere coincidence.

### Are Those Signs Forbidden, Too?



ROYCE BRIER

## Soviet Tanks Represent Gamble in Czechoslovakia

It now appears fairly certain that the Czech people have won nothing but the right to stay alive in the recent Soviet invasion of their land.

This is an important right for insects, and other small manifestations of the life process, and indeed not many of them can exercise it for long. But it is of no great value to human beings who understand and honor their heritage and not many of them of this stripe are going to tolerate it indefinitely.

If the Russians think that because their tanks were instrumental in freeing the eastern Europeans from the grip of the Hitler tyranny, they inherited or acquired the right to visit another, if less bloody, tyranny on the eastern Europeans, they are likely to be surprised.

Like the Americans who, in their current phase, believe they are chosen of God to set the Asians on a virtuous path, the Russians are likely to discover that this is an unpromising undertaking in eastern Europe, with diminishing returns as time goes on.

Some months ago the Czechs decided they had had enough of a life in which their thought and speech were suppressed by senseless rulers under threat of personal injury.

The yearning to destroy this insensate tyranny grew and became of such power as to overthrow the tyranny and substitute a government which took some account of its people and their true well being.

The government, headed by Alexander Dubcek, was not one calculated to overthrow the socialist economy common to middle Europe, nor was it calculated to un-

dermine the master plan prescriptive in Moscow. The Czechs were a different people, with their own ideas and problems separate from the ideas and problems the master-planners imposed on the Russian people and several of their neighbors.

But the master planners in Moscow comprise a timid hierarchy frightened by any social system deviating from

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the rigid rules evolved over the half century since the days of Lenin.

So the master planners occupied Czechoslovakia with tanks without warning in the dead of night, paralyzing the social and economic life of the Czechs.

In a new and inexplicable humanitarianism, the Czech leaders were not stood before a firing squad, but

were forced to make humiliating appearances in Moscow, where they were ordered to return to Prague and demolish the structure of liberty they had fashioned.

The price, of course, was their lives and a farcical acquiescence in a new tyranny resembling the old they had discarded.

This did not set well with the Czechs, nor with the world in general. Some of their neighbors and presumed satellites protested. This included the Rumanians, who are possibly laying the groundwork for their own occupation.

But this process may operate by a law of diminishing returns. Policing people outside your borders, as we have discovered, indeed as Napoleon discovered long ago, contains hidden dangers of over-extension which can lead to disaster.

Whether the Moscow hierarchy understands this we have no means of knowing. But if it doesn't care for Napoleon, it might look to Genghis Khan, who was going to conquer the world but was over-extended on the day he died.

### Quote

A word to the wife is seldom wise. — C. U. Weekly in the Pennsburg (Pa.) Town and Country.

Automation hasn't cut out red tape, it merely perforated it.—Homer Bridgeman in the Baylis (Ill.) Guide.

It's usually the weak threads in your fibre that people want to jerk and pull.—Marie Phelps in the Harriburg (Ore.) Bulletin.

The only person ever to get his work done by Friday was Robinson Crusoe.—Chuck Hagen in the Cornell (Wis.) Courier.

### HERB CAEN SAYS:

## Outlanders Are Wrecking Cars

San Francisco

Bay City beat: Well-meaning tourists who stand on the Powell turntable while "helping" to turn the cable car are not helping at all; quite the contrary. . . . As a veteran of the Powell line, I would have to say that our cars are being dangerously overloaded. Shouldn't somebody who knows about stress and strain be counting bodies before these marvelous old cars simply fall apart? There were so many outlanders on the bottom step the other day, it was tilting downward at almost a 45-degree angle. . . . Further cablese: No street in S.F. is named for Andrew Hallidie, inventor of the cable car—and now there's a gilded opportunity. Fifth Street, when it crosses Market (as it will any day), should be named Hallidie—and the tiny plaza to be created there could contain a cable car monument.

After considerable research in the Frozen North, Anthropologist William S. Laughlin reports, among other things, that Eskimos no longer rub noses—now they kiss just like everybody else. Shucks. With my outsized proboscis, I was counting on spending my declining years as a Great Lover up there. . . .

Excerpt from a letter written by Vernon Sturgeon, the Governor's Legislative Secretary, to four Peninsula clergymen: "I have discussed your letter with Governor Reagan and he asked me to tell you in response to your concern that he places property rights above human rights, that he sincerely believes that property rights are the very basis of human rights." Tell it to the Indians.

Woody Allen filming "Take the Money and Run" here, had a terrible time with a temperamental star—a talented seven-year-old actor named Mitchell Tunick of San Carlos, who plays Woody as a child. Overheard on the set, Woody trying to placate Mitchell: "Don't you want to be in the movies?" "No!" "How do you like this movie?" "Terrible!" And besides that, he doesn't want to grow up to look like Woody Allen. . . . On the other hand, Jetty Schmidt, a fitter at San Francisco's Saks, has nothing but fans. Her adoring customers got together—anonously—and sent her a round-trip ticket to London, plus expenses. Take a fitter to lunch this week.

Add ceteras: The big laugh in local legal circles concerns the judge who sentenced a defendant to a year in jail only to have the clerk whisper to him: "You can't do that—the limit for that offense is six months," and there go de judge! . . . This makes me feel good: The American Conservatory Theater's "Your Own Thing," which was in danger of closing has been extended all the way to Dec. 15, having suddenly become the hottest ticket in town.

For the "would you believe—?" file, Dave Ross suggests this sign in the Donut Palace on Market: "The story of the doughnut as we know it. During the sailing ship era, the helmsman could not steer the ship and hold his coffee and cookies at the same time. Therefore the ship's cook cut holes in the cookies to fit the spoke of the steering wheel"—and I believe it, don't you?

Waitress to pesty guy at Joe's in Hillsdale: "Lay off, you're old enough to be my father." Guy: "It's possible—what was your mother's name?" (Hey, is that older than the both of us?)

### Morning Report:

It's very easy to put the knick on bureaucrats—as I have myself demonstrated. They are the people who order us to fill out government forms and then discover that line No. 12 was missed. Also, they often say "no" and nobody likes that.

But when they work on our side, they are the greatest. As the other day when I applied for a passport at 1 p.m. The little blonde behind the counter administered my oath in an efficient and friendly fashion and at 10 a.m. the next day, the postman on our block dropped a passport in my mailbox.

How two of the Nation's biggest bundle of bureaucrats, the State Department and the Post Office, conspired to bring about this miracle, I'll never know. But it was a wonderful way to start a vacation. I thank all concerned.

Abe Mellinkoff

### FROM THE MAILBOX

## Mayor Questions Effect Of Freeway Route Here

To the Editor:

The proposed Torrance Freeway is causing deep concern and anxiety to thousands of Torrance homeowners. Many opinions have been expressed and recommendations made at meetings and preliminary hearings. More hearings will be held and reams of petitions will be presented. All appear to be based on the assumption that it is a fact that the freeway is inevitable and that we have no choice in the matter other than in the choice of routes. I believe this is incorrect.

It is my understanding that the freeway cannot be constructed without majority approval of the Torrance City Council for closure of streets.

The purpose of this letter is to publicize the problems and to stimulate thought and debate on the matter. In attempting to arrive at my own decision, I am asking questions.

Have the recommendations to date taken into consideration the following?

1. Hundreds of homeowners, longtime residents who helped build the community, will lose their homes in the direct path of the freeway. Families will be uprooted and forced to leave Torrance.

2. Thousands more whose homes are adjacent to the freeway will suffer staggering financial loss in lowered property values with no compensation paid them by the state. Those who can't afford to sell out at the lowered prices will be forced to stay and bear the brunt of

exhaust fumes, traffic noise, and ugliness.

3. All neighborhoods within sight, sound and smell of the freeway will be substantially downgraded in desirability and value.

4. Feeling of homeowners in the affected areas will change from joy and pride in their homes to resentment and bitterness.

5. The city of Torrance will suffer enormous loss of sales tax revenue from businesses, restaurants, and motels located on Pacific Coast Highway.

6. Economic decline for businesses, restaurants and motels on Pacific Coast Highway.

Are there any satisfactory alternatives to the freeway, such as widening, improving and lengthening existing travel arteries and surface street and bringing in new streets already on our master plan?

Are some members of the Planning Commission and Chamber of Commerce in error in avoiding the use of industrial land for the freeway? Have they considered the fact that in contrast to residential neighborhood, a freeway improves and builds industrial areas? That it attracts new industry? That aesthetically it does no harm, and that the traffic noise is more acceptable than anywhere else?

Since the purpose of the freeway is to serve the greatest number of persons and to relieve traffic congestion at its major centers of concentration, such as Del Amo Center and the industrial areas, shouldn't the freeway be located as close

as possible to where the greatest need exists?

Why have the recommendations of our traffic engineer been ignored? Isn't he the most qualified expert on this subject?

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the freeway Sept. 23 and the City Council will hold a public hearing Oct. 3. Both hearings will take place at Torrance High School at 7 p.m.

I urge all interested residents to attend these hearings. Please give this matter your serious thought and let your thinking be known.

Sincerely,  
ALBERT ISEN, Mayor  
City of Torrance

### Red Cross Says Thanks

To the Editor:

I want you to know we do appreciate the photo layout and story on the Red Cross Blood Program in your September 1 issue. I'm sure the many fine volunteers in the Torrance area will get a lift from this kind of public recognition of their efforts.

We try to say "thank you" to them in a variety of ways, but nothing ever matches display like this in their local newspaper. Many thanks. Please feel free to call anytime my office can be of help to you.

JAMES P. KALIVAS,  
Director, Public Relations,  
Los Angeles Chapter,  
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